

Qualitative Case Review

Eastern Region

Fiscal Year 2002

Preliminary Results

Office of Services Review

May 2002

Executive Summary

- 24 cases were reviewed for the Eastern Region Qualitative Case Review.
- **95.8% of the cases scored in the acceptable range on the Overall Child Status, compared to 83.3% last year. This is a remarkable result and meets the exit goal of 85% required in the Milestone Plan.**
- Safety was also very high with all but one case scoring in the acceptable range (95.8%).
- Notable improvements were measured on Prospect for Permanence, which was one of the major concerns last year. The score went from 58.3% last year to 75% this year. Satisfaction scored 95.8%.
- **The Overall System Performance score went from 75% last year to 66.7% this year. This is a slight decline from last year, but it's still one of the best results in the state.** The scores on most of the indicators improved over last year. Functional Assessment and Long-term View are the two areas needing special attention.
- Two core indicators reached the 70% mark set for exit: Plan implementation and Tracking and Adaptation. Two additional indicators are only one case short of reaching the exit mark: Child and Family Team and Coordination (Teaming) and Child and Family Planning Process (Planning).
- The decline noted on the Overall System Performance is partially due to the low scores received on the cases with Native American children. Only three of the seven Native American cases scored in the acceptable range on System Performance and only minimally so. If these seven cases were removed from the total, the performance of Eastern Region would actually show a slight improvement over last year. Barriers when working with Native American families and the tribes need to be addressed in order to improve outcomes for Native American children.
- Home-based cases scored slightly higher on average, than foster care cases.
- A third of all cases had a goal of Permanent Foster Care, which is higher than elsewhere and is due to the large number of Native American cases with that goal. Cases with a goal of Permanent Foster Care performed less well, on average, than cases with other goals. Caseload size and length of employment of caseworkers did not seem to have any significant correlation with the QCR results.

Methodology

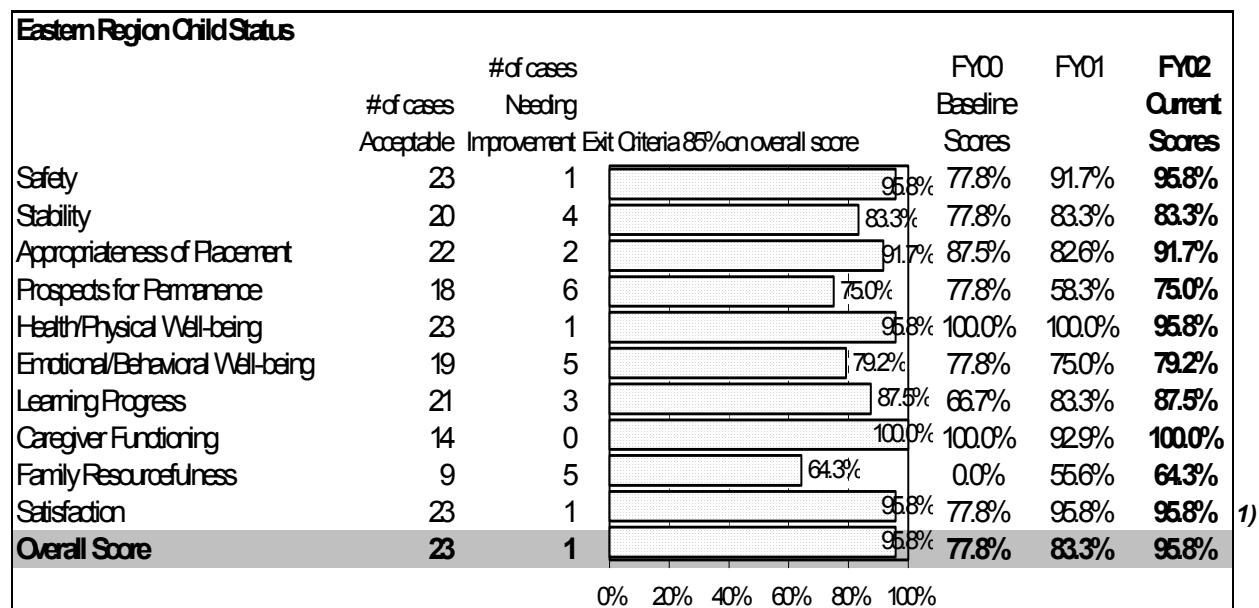
The Qualitative Case Review was held the week of April 15-19, 2002. Twenty-four open DCFS cases in the Eastern Region were selected and scored. The cases were reviewed by certified reviewers from the Child Welfare Policy and Practice Group (CWPPG), the Office of Services Review (OSR), and the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS), as well as first time reviewers from DCFS and outside stakeholders. The cases were selected by CWPPG based on a sampling matrix assuring that a representative group of children were reviewed. The sample included children in out-of-home care and families receiving home-based services, such as voluntary and protective supervision and intensive family preservation. Cases were selected to include offices throughout the region.

The information was obtained through in-depth interviews with the child (if old enough to participate), his or her parents, or other guardians, foster-parents (when placed in foster care), caseworker, teacher, therapist, other service providers, and others having a significant role in the child's life. In addition, the child's file, including prior CPS investigations, and other available records were reviewed.

Performance Tables

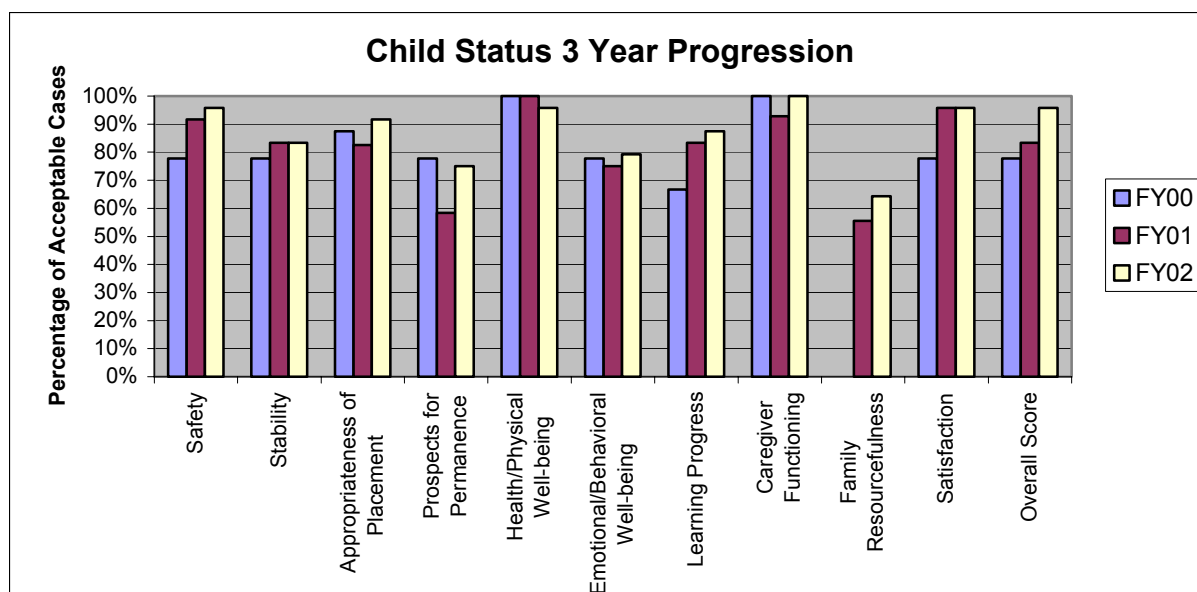
Preliminary data

The results in the following tables are based on the scores provided to OSR at the end of the Eastern Region Review. They contain the scores of 24 cases. These results are preliminary only and are subject to change until all reviewers have submitted their case stories.



1) This score reflects the percent of cases that had an overall acceptable Child Status score. It is not an average of FY02 current scores.

Note: these scores are preliminary and subject to change



Statistical Analysis of Child Status Results:

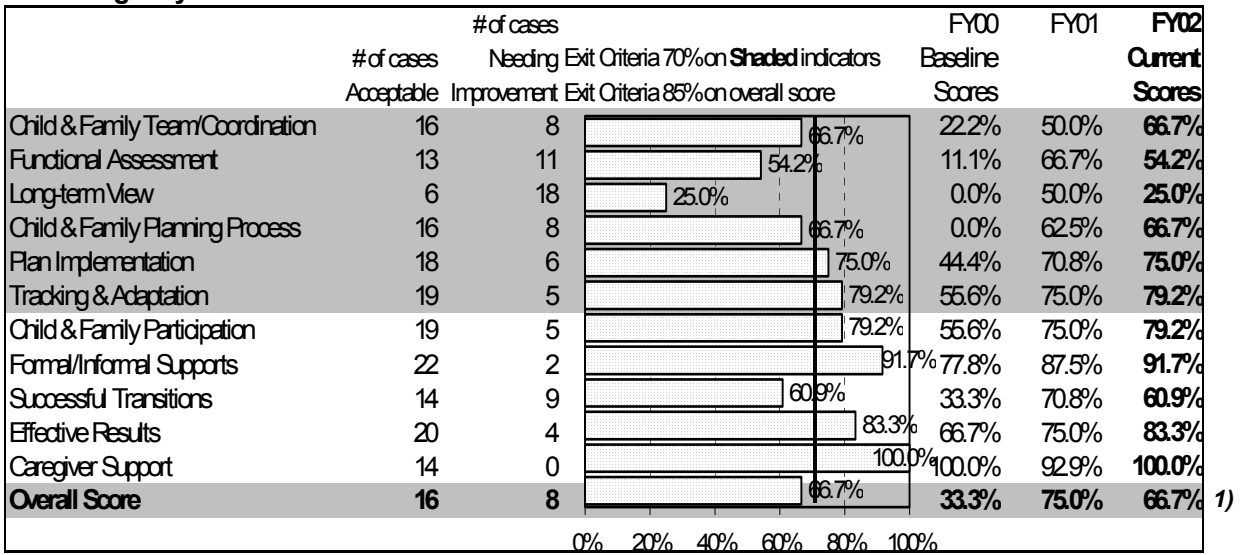
23 of 24 cases scored in the acceptable range on the Overall Child Status, that's 95.8%, compared to 83.3% last year. This is a remarkable result and meets the exit goal of 85% required in the Milestone Plan.

Safety scored very high with all but one case in the acceptable range (95.8%, compared to 91.7% last year).

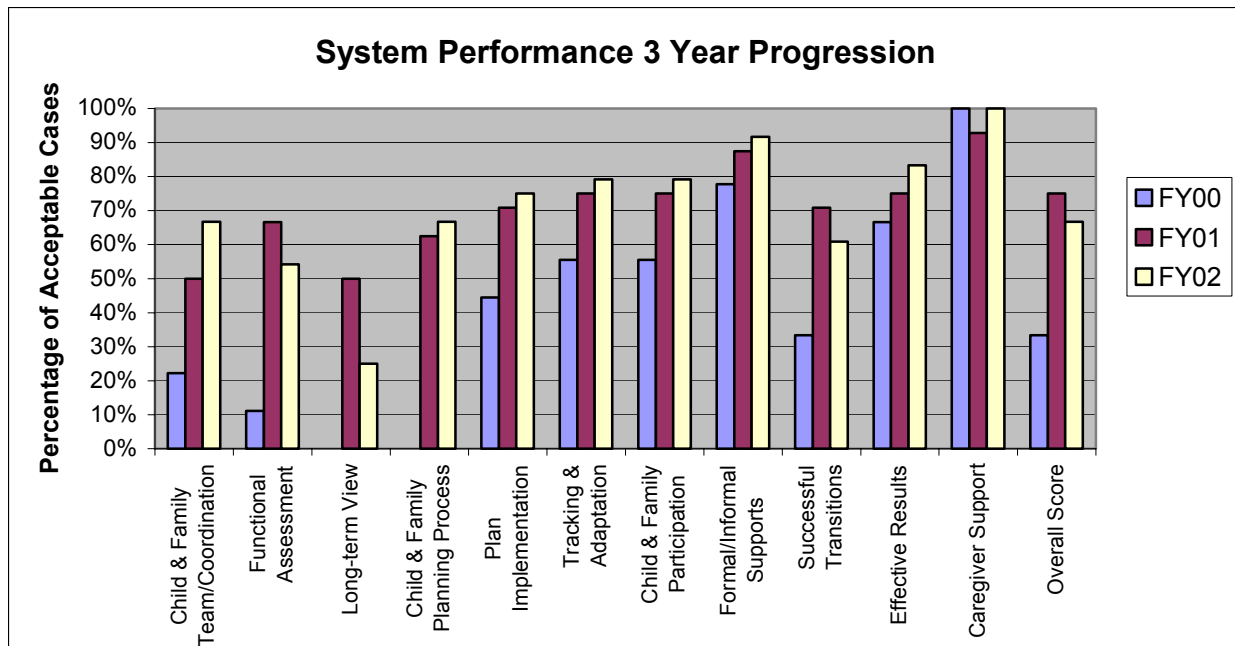
Every Child Status indicator improved since last year or stayed the same, except for a slight decrease on Physical Health, which still scores very highly with 95.8%. Almost all the indicators came in at or above 75%, most of them actually in the 80's and 90's. Family Functioning and Resourcefulness is the only exception with 64.3%, which is still a substantial improvement over last year's score of 55.6%.

It is worth noting the progress measured on Prospect for Permanence, which was one of the major concerns last year. It went from 58.3% last year to 75% this year. Another result that's worth pointing out is that Satisfaction scored 95.8%. This reflects that clients – families served by the agency and foster families – are clearly satisfied with the services they receive and the way they are treated by the agency.

Eastern Region System Performance



1) This score reflects the percent of cases that had an overall acceptable System Performance score. It is not an average of FY02 current scores.



Note: these scores are preliminary and subject to change

Statistical Analysis of System Performance Results:

The Overall System Performance score went from 75% last year to 66.7% this year. This is a slight decline from last year, but it's still one of the best results in the state.

Most indicators scored highly and improved over last year. Teaming shows remarkable progress. The score went from 50% to 66.7%. Other positive results worth noting include: Caregiver Support – that's support provided by the agency to our substitute caregivers – scored at 100%, and Formal and Informal Supports and Services reached 91.7%, which is an indication that this region is using creative means to overcome the resource scarcity normally faced by rural regions. Child and Family participation also scored high with 79.2% in the acceptable range.

The slight decline on the overall system performance is due to a regression on Functional Assessment, which went from 66.7% to 54.2%, Long-term View (50% to 25%), and the closely related Successful Transitions (70.8% to 60.9%). (See next chapter for more information).

Of the core indicators two reached the 70% mark set for exit: Plan implementation with 75% and Tracking and Adaptation with 79.2%. Two additional indicators are only one case short of reaching the exit mark: Teaming and Planning Process with 66.7% each.

Results without the Native American Cases

The slight decline noted on the Overall System Performance is partially due to the low scores received on the cases with Native American children. Of the 24 cases reviewed, seven had a Native American target child. Of these seven cases, only three scored in the acceptable range on System Performance and only minimally so. This finding raises concerns that will be discussed in the "Summary of Findings". If these seven cases were removed from the total, the performance would actually reach 76.5%. In other words, without the Native American cases the region's performance would actually improve slightly (see following table).

Eastern System Performance (without Native American cases)

	# of cases		FY00		FY01	FY02
	# of cases	Needing Exit Criteria 70% on Shaded indicators	Baseline			Current
	Acceptable	Improvement	Exit Criteria 85% on overall score	Scores		Scores
Child & Family Team/Coordination	14	3	82.4%	22.2%	50.0%	82.4%
Functional Assessment	10	7	58.8%	11.1%	66.7%	58.8%
Long-term View	6	11	35.3%	0.0%	50.0%	35.3%
Child & Family Planning Process	14	3	82.4%	0.0%	62.5%	82.4%
Plan Implementation	13	4	76.5%	44.4%	70.8%	76.5%
Tracking & Adaptation	15	2	88.2%	55.6%	75.0%	88.2%
Child & Family Participation	14	3	82.4%	55.6%	75.0%	82.4%
Formal/Informal Supports	17	0	100.0%	77.8%	87.5%	100.0%
Successful Transitions	11	5	68.8%	33.3%	70.8%	68.8%
Effective Results	15	2	88.2%	66.7%	75.0%	88.2%
Caregiver Support	9	0	100.0%	100.0%	92.9%	100.0%
Overall Score	13	4	76.5%	33.3%	75.0%	76.5%

ANALYSIS OF DATA

RESULTS BY CASE TYPE AND PERMANENCY GOAL

In contrast with past years, home-based cases scored slightly higher, on an average, than foster care cases. 73% of the home-based cases had an acceptable overall System Performance and the average score was 4.0, while only 62% of the foster care cases passed with an average score of 3.8. On the Child Status side only one case had an unacceptable overall score and it was a home-based case. The average Child Status score showed the same trend. The average score for home-based cases was 4.9 and it was 4.7 for foster care cases.

Case Type	# in sample	# Acceptable	% Acceptable	Average score
System Performance				
Foster Care	13	8	62%	3.8
Home-based	11	8	73%	4.0
Child Status				
Foster Care	13	13	100%	4.7
Home-based	11	10	91%	4.9

The following table displays the results by Permanency Goal. It is worth noting that of the 24 cases reviewed, a third had a goal of Permanent Foster Care. That's much higher than elsewhere and is due to the large number of Native American foster care cases with that goal. This category is the one with the lowest percentage of acceptable System Performance scores: 63%.

Child Status			
Permanency Goal	# in sample	# Acceptable	% Acceptable
Adoption	1	1	100%
Guardianship	2	2	100%
Independent Living	1	1	100%
Permanent Foster Care	8	8	100%
Remain Home	9	8	89%
Return Home	3	3	100%
System Performance			
Permanency Goal	# in sample	# Acceptable	% Acceptable
Adoption	1	1	100%
Guardianship	2	0	0%
Independent Living	1	1	100%
Permanent Foster Care	8	5	63%
Remain Home	9	7	78%
Return Home	3	2	67%

RESULTS BY AGE AND ETHNICITY OF TARGET CHILD

Contrary to the trends in other reviews, the comparison of the scores for cases with older and younger children shows better results in cases with older children, on average. Among the 24 cases reviewed, 15 cases had a target child who was 13 years or older. Of these 13 cases with teenage children, 11 cases had an acceptable overall System Performance (73%). In comparison, only 56% of the cases with younger children had acceptable results. This region may have a special sensitivity to dealing with teenagers.

	# of cases in sample	Scored acceptable	Scored unacceptable
System Performance			
Cases with target child 0-12 years old	9	5 (56%)	4 (44%)
Cases with target child 13+ years old	15	11 (73%)	4 (27%)
Child Status			
Cases with target child 0-12 years old	9	9 (100%)	0 (0%)
Cases with target child 13+ years old	15	14 (93%)	1 (7%)

When looking at the results by ethnicity of the target child, the data shows that cases with Caucasian children performed better than cases with children of other ethnicities. 10 of 24 cases had a non-Caucasian target child, and of these 10 cases only half scored in the acceptable range, 50%, while 79% of the cases with Caucasian children did so. Of these 10 children, seven were Native American children and three of Hispanic descent. The one case with an unacceptable Child Status was a case with a Native American target child.

	# of cases in sample	Scored acceptable on System Performance	Scored unacceptable on System Performance
Cases with a Caucasian target child	14	11 (79%)	3 (21%)
Cases with a non-Caucasian target child	10	5 (50%)	5 (50%)
	Native American: 7	3 (43%)	4 (57%)
	Hispanic: 3	2 (67%)	1 (33%)

RESULTS BY CASEWORKER DEMOGRAPHICS

When looking at the results by caseload size OSR usually sets the cut-off line at 16 cases for a “normal” caseload and 17 or more cases for a high caseload. In Eastern Region only two caseworkers reviewed indicated that their caseload was higher than 16

and both of their cases passed on System Performance. All the other workers had a caseload size lower than 16 cases. This in itself is a positive result, as this reflects an overall manageable caseload size.

Since the caseworkers in rural regions usually have to spend a considerable amount of time traveling on the road, OSR can see a justifiable rationale for lowering the cut-off line for a manageable caseload size to 12 cases, especially for out-of-home cases. Under this scenario, 67% of the caseworkers with a “manageable” caseload scored in the acceptable range on System Performance, while 57% of the workers with a large caseload (more than 12 cases) scored well. However, this difference is not large enough to support the theory that high caseloads impact performance.

Of course, caseload size alone is not always a good indication of the actual workload, which can vary depending on the complexity of the case. But since workload is not easy to measure, we have to rely on data about caseload size for comparison.

Caseload Size: # of open cases	Total # of cases	Scored acceptable on System Performance	Scored unacceptable on System Performance
12 open cases or less	15	10 (67%)	5 (33%)
13 open cases or more	7	4 (57%)	3 (43%)

(Based on 22 cases; 2 cases were missing information on caseload size)

There were no significant trends on employment length either. It is worth mentioning that only 4 of the 23 caseworkers, who provided information on the length of time they had been working for the Division, have been working in their current position for less than a year. All others have been employed by DCFS for more than a year, which demonstrates a lower turnover rate than in urban areas.

Summary of Findings

Based on the information gathered during the case debriefings held during the review week, the content analysis of the case stories, and the stakeholder interviews (see appendix)

As mentioned earlier, the results are encouraging, especially the results on Child Status. There have also been significant improvements on System Performance. There is clear evidence that the Practice Model Principles are being implemented in this region and resulting in positive outcomes. Child and Family team meetings are being held in practically all cases and two thirds of the cases now have acceptable teaming scores. Many workers still seem to struggle to understand the concept of Functional Assessment and Long-term View. These two areas remain a concern for the region. The following chapter intends to address these two subjects, as well as some of the resource and systems issues. The difficulties surrounding cases with Native American children is also addressed throughout this section.

Functional Assessment

The files usually contained written Functional Assessments. They were generally updated on a regular basis. Some of the written functional assessments provided the history on the case and strengths and needs were identified. There were some excellent functional assessments that were developed by the team in meetings and addressed underlying issues. But this was not across the board. The main concerns regarding functional assessments included:

- In several cases there was a need for a better understanding of the resources available to the caregivers and their need for additional support to provide appropriate care in the long run (caregivers being parents, relatives, or foster parents). This has a direct impact on Long-term View.
- Sometimes the functional assessment was focused on the child, yet a better understanding of the family and their issues was missing. In some tribal cases, there was a need to better understand the abilities of the extended family to contribute and support the child/family.
- One of the concerns reported in several cases was that the functional assessment did not drive the planning process (the case plan was not built using the information from the functional assessment).
- Often the functional assessment was a product of the caseworker, rather than of the team. Input from team members was not included in the assessment..
- In some cases the functional assessment needed to include the family's history to provide better understanding and complete the big picture of the family.
- Sometimes the concern is around really understanding the underlying causes of the family's/child's problems. For example, in one case the reviewers found a 13 page long assessment, but it was missing an analysis or conclusion of the many

information pieces gathered, and as a result did not lead to services that were individualized to meet the child and family's special needs.

- In some cases special assessments and evaluations on the children and the parents had been done (mental health, educational, substance abuse assessments, etc.), but the information was not available to the team.

Long-term View, Transitions, Permanence

- One of the recurring themes around long-term view seems to be a lack of involvement of parents and other family members in the child's life when the goal is permanent foster care. Several reviewers reported in their case a need to place more efforts on involving family members in the child's life, even after reunification efforts failed. Parents and other family members can provide support and a sense of belonging, even if they can't be the caregivers. This was especially true in several of the Native American cases.
- Some of the cases, before closure, lacked a good assessment and involvement of the informal support network available to the family for a long-term success. In one case, for example, the family received a large number of formal services that were scheduled to end soon without a network of informal supports to step in. There was no transition planning for the closing of the case.
- Sometimes the caseworker had a clear picture for the family's long-term view, but it was not shared with the team. In other examples the team had a common view of the long-term needs and goals for the family, but no clear steps to achieve this goal.
- The long-term view for teenagers who are close to exiting the system is a struggle in some cases. They need clear plans that will allow them to have the skills and resources, including meaningful and continuing relationships, to be successful in their adult life. This also means paying close attention to their educational and vocational needs.
- Permanence for Native American children: An unresolved dilemma remains for Native American children when reunification services are terminated after 12 months and the goal is changed to permanent foster care. In one case for example, the goal of a three-year-old child was changed to permanent foster care after reunification efforts were terminated due to the mother not making any progress. This also ended visitation between the child and her mother, as well as with her brother, who was placed in another foster home. Foster care is not a permanent solution, certainly not for young children. Since the tribal courts will not approve termination of parental rights and may even consider reunification several years down the road, the agency may want to maintain contact with the family (unless contrary to the child's interest). There is a need to explore with representatives of the tribes ways to achieve some sort of permanency for these children that is culturally acceptable.

Resources / Systems Issues

It's important to point out that the scores on "Formal and Informal Supports and Services" are very high with only two cases below acceptable levels. These positive scores reflect that the region uses creative ways to address the scarcity of locally available resources. While it's important to celebrate this success, it's a constant strain for the management of this region to find ways to overcome some of the shortage of local resources. Some of the resource needs and systems issues are discussed below. Among the positive findings in resource availability are examples of children placed within the reservation. In the past, these children would most likely have been placed outside of the reservation.

- Travel distances for caseworkers are a real challenge for the Eastern Region. It impacts visitation with the children in foster care cases, as well as the ability to coordinate a child and family team meeting with all parties attending.
- There is a lack of locally available foster care placements, which results in children being placed far from their birth families, and this impacts reunification efforts. Especially when the children need specialized care, they often end up on the Wasatch Front.
- There is a need for substance abuse treatment facilities for adults in Moab, where the Methamphetamine problem is particularly severe.
- An unmet need for residential substance abuse treatment for a teenage boy on the reservation lead to his scores on Safety and overall Child Status failing. Also his educational needs were not met.
- Some partners are reluctant to share case relevant information, which impacts the ability for efficient case planning (for example: Youth Corrections not sharing a child's mental health evaluation with DCFS). Some of the partners are not attending child and family team meetings. Overall though, the majority of the partners are appreciative partners on the team meetings.
- On the reservation the extended family is thought of and involved in terms of placement options. But there is a need to look at extended family in broader ways, such as gaining their approval for decisions and exploring ways of using their support network and their ability to provide connection to the child's culture (long-term view).
- The five cases of the Ute Family Center show a need to assist the staff of this office in improving their practice around teaming, functional assessment and long-term view (only one case out of five scored on an acceptable level on Teaming and Functional Assessment, and none on Long-term View).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the case review and stakeholder interviews

- Staff need help to better understand the concept of Functional Assessment and Long-term View.
- Discuss ways of maintaining the children's connections with their families, even when they are not a viable placement option at the present time, as this provides them with a sense of belonging and long-term relationships. Maintaining connections of Native American children with their extended family is particularly important.
- There is a need to explore with representatives of the tribes ways to achieve permanency for Native American children that is culturally acceptable. The Ute Family Center needs support to address the barriers of working with the tribes and to improve performance and outcomes for Native American children.
- Develop mentoring capacity, particularly for new workers and around facilitating child and family team meetings. Strengthen the role of supervisors in mentoring. Involve the staff in the region who have demonstrated that they have mastered Practice Model skills in assisting others.
- Explore ways to promote the development of needed resources that are available locally, such as more foster homes, in particular for specialized care, and culturally sensitive resources for Native American children. This includes foster homes, special educational services, and residential substance abuse treatment for children.
- Encourage community partners to actively participate in the child and family team. Try to address the barriers of some of the community partners still hesitant to become an active member of the team, whether it is because of confidentiality issues, "turf" problems, or long distances.
- Continue on this positive track of implementing the Practice Model Principles. Use the findings of this review and the case stories to target the training around specific indicators (such as Functional Assessment and Long-term View) and particular teams still struggling with some of these new concepts.
- Celebrate successes and commend workers for the positive results of this review.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1

Summary of Stakeholder Interviews

Community stakeholders interviewed as part of the review process for the Eastern Region in April 2002 included: Mike Halliday, Blanding Chief of Police; Mary Manley, Juvenile Court Judge – Grand, Emery and Carbon counties; Tim Nyland, Grand County Sheriff; Robert Cox, Carbon High School; Judge Ridley, Tribal Juvenile Court - Ft. Duchesne; Robert Hall, Clinical Director of Northeastern Counseling. Focus Group with Caseworkers and Focus Group with Supervisors at the Ute Family Center, Moab and Blanding DCFS offices.

What is Working Well:

- Community partners see many improvements in relationships and collaboration between DCFS, the courts and tribal agencies. There is information sharing and role exploration. Involved parties are more informed about court procedures.
- The Ute Tribal Social Services has a worker providing home-based services and some new foster parents have been recruited on the reservation.
- There are now about twenty law students who are GAL's for children on the Ute Reservation. This is a big improvement.
- Utah DCFS respects ICWA requirements compared to many other states.
- There is more concerted effort to keep siblings together and to achieve permanency for children in Grand County.
- Parents are participating in mediation and Child and Family (C & F) Team Meetings. They are acknowledging their participation in court in Grand County.
- There is a positive long-term working relationship between law enforcement and DCFS in Blanding.
- There is good coordination and communication between FBI, Tribal Social Services, the San Juan County Sheriff, DCFS and the Blanding Police Department.
- Response of the On-Call CPS worker to calls from law enforcement has improved during the past year in Grand County.

Improvement Opportunities:

- Stakeholder does not believe that the Ute Tribal Social Services is ready to take over cases from the Ute Family Center. In particular, more training is needed for CPS investigations.
- There is a need for more resources and substance abuse treatment programs for adolescents. This is true for tribal cases as well as in other rural communities in Eastern Region.
- There is a lack of treatment resources for perpetrators of sex abuse. In one community it was reported that the same therapist was counseling the perpetrator as well as the victim.
- There is a need for good treatment programs for parents with substance abuse problems in Moab. There is an epidemic of methamphetamine abuse and a lack of resources to help parents; therefore, due to ASFA timeframes for permanency,

many parents are losing parental rights and children are losing family connections.

- There is a lack of resources for Peer Parenting. DCFS needs a strong Parenting Program.
- There is a challenge to protect information for on-going investigations (by law enforcement and CPS), knowing when to involve law enforcement and how to maintain confidentiality at Multi-disciplinary Staffings.

Summary of Focus Groups

Focus Groups were conducted with caseworkers and supervisors at the Ute Family Center, Moab and Blanding DCFS Offices.

What is Working Well:

- Caseworkers are now using C & F Team Meetings regularly and report that these meeting work and are useful most of the time.
- Mental health, the Frontier Project in particular, has bought in to the process of using the Practice Model Principals.
- School involvement in the C & F Team in Moab is good. Holding meetings at the school has helped to ensure participation by the teachers and the principal.
- Supervisory support in the Moab Office has been excellent during the past year.
- CPS is great at keeping children from getting involved with DCFS. The C & F Team Meetings are being used to create good safety plans that minimize agency involvement. Resources and ideas come out of the meetings that were not previously identified.
- There is a close working relationship between CPS and the on-going worker in the Moab office.
- Blanding caseworkers feel that they are culturally sensitive and that there is good interagency collaboration with the Ute and Navajo tribes.
- Abel Ortiz is working on the issue of mental health capitation and how to get therapists paid for attending C & F Team Meetings.
- The Division of Youth Corrections is going to build a new Observation & Assessment Unit in Blanding This will help delinquent kids get services without involving DCFS.
- Access to SAFE at the Ute Family Center is better and helping with the paperwork.
- There is a lot of support for new workers at UFC. "It's like a big family here, everyone is willing to help, good place to work."

Concerns and Improvement Opportunities:

- Solutions are needed for how to deal with permanency for tribal cases. Consider the idea of long-term foster care as an acceptable permanence goal.
- A lack of foster homes in the region is creating hours of driving time for caseworkers to visit children. More foster parents are needed in rural communities.
- Confidentiality is a problem. It is often "rule bound" rather than needs based.
- More flexible funding is needed.
- As mentioned by other stakeholders, caseworkers and supervisors see a need for more therapy options for families.

- Some mental health providers are enabling adolescents by not dealing directly with the issue of substance abuse.
- The requirement for who needs to be at C & F Team Meetings is becoming rules based – not needs based. “Middle management is asking for a list of team members.” There seem to be different expectations in different offices. Caseworkers want clarification around the issue of teaming and coordination.
- Caseworkers have requested assistance with C & F Team Meetings. It is difficult to take notes and facilitate meetings at the same time.
- The requirement for a written Functional Assessment has created more paperwork. There is a need to streamline or combine some of the required forms.
- Some caseworkers would like the Office Tech to assist with scheduling for C & F Team Meetings.
- Replacements for valuable employees that have recently left their positions at the Ute Family Center and the Moab Office are needed. These individuals were teaching parenting classes, facilitating C & F Team Meetings and assisting with visitation.

APPENDIX 2

Exit Conference: Flip chart notes

Strengths

Family team meeting are being held

- Families are involved & choosing their team.
- Multiple meetings have been held
- Many professionals impressed with meetings: useful, helpful
- Meetings starting with CPS
- Routine
- Functional assessments are done, updated after meetings
- Caseworker sees children even though travel distances are long
- Looking for solutions
- Stakeholders are seeing improvements in their working relationship with the Division
- Good examples of tracking & adaptation, changing providers, if needed
- Plans are being individualized & adapted – addendums are being made
- Some very individualized plans
- Services for extended family from beginning of case
- Creative visitation plans, traveling a long way to maintain sibling visits
- Safety Plans are good
- Work being done to maintain sibling bonds
- Supervisors are mentoring new caseworkers on how to do team meetings and how to use Practice Model Principles
- Excellent working relationships with some Native American Tribal agencies
- Permanency being achieved within required timeframes for many cases
- Respect and cooperation between community partners and DCFS
- Some C & F Team Meetings are being used to address long-term view – issues/ changes
- Examples of good caseworker advocacy for clients
- Foster parents respected and engaged
- Foster parents willing to work with birth parents and siblings (and the reverse)
- YIC working well with children to address special needs
- Good supports for kinship placements
- Many committed workers that “go the extra mile”

Improvement Opportunities

- Some meetings are still agency driven, rather than family driven, more like staffings
- Refine the process of Functional Assessment by getting to the underlying needs / issues
- Need for culturally sensitive resources for Native American children (especially foster homes)
- Still some community partners not willing/ able to come to the table → impacts outcomes
- Challenge: How do we balance the view of the formal system (professionals + agency) and of the family
- Challenge of getting the new child and family case plan template
- Looking at extended family as more than just a placement resource
- Visitation used as reward/ punishment, responsibility left to the therapist
- Visitation is the child's right
- Visitation to maintain a bond with family members in view of the long-term need for family connection
- Case Plans need to be more strength-based
- Challenge: clan politics (turf issues) can be a barrier to accessing resources
- Challenge: more open communication with the tribal courts
- Permanency: challenge because the status quo is accepted in Native American cases → how do we continue to work successfully on cases where the goal isn't reunification or adoption
- Gaps in Functional Assessments related to the family history resulting in incomplete shared Long-Term view
- Changes in the family circumstances = challenge for long-term view → Ask the family about their plans
- Need: special education services, also for more communication + advocacy (communication between YIC, schools + DCFS) → how to work with confidentiality in small communities → school system in Roosevelt not always culturally sensitive
- Need to address the amount of paper work
- Community partners want to be part of the planning process

Steps/ Recommendation

- Clarification on the process of Functional Assessment + Family Team Meetings
- Incorporate the discussion on long-term view in most every Family Team Meeting
- Increasing the mentoring process → Everyone who is in a mentoring role participate in the QCR as a reviewer
- Developing more strategies related to working with the Native American tribes → Include Native American view in the review tool
- Look at creative + new ways (engagement) to involve informal supports of the family
- Help get more foster parents to the Practice Model training